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There is nothing new under the Sun. SOLOMON.

Man has been for so many centuries advancing in experience and observation that it seems in the present age as if he was acquainted with every species of knowledge & had no opportunity of making discoveries in any art or Science. This is particularly the case in the Literary World where it seems as if every great truth on every serious subject had long been settled by general consent. for

it appears on the comparison of the works of antient and modern authors that they who wrote two thousand years since had quite as deep an insight into the nature of man and the wonders of the Univers as the Moralists the Poets and the Philosophers of the present day we of course have a limited range for observation and originality of invention we can but remould the Ideas of others - and repeat perhaps the same sentiment for the thousandth time which has been a thousand times uttered by every Son of Adam since the flood as this barrenness is the subject of universal complaint and effectin a degree all modern Publications we seriously recommend it to our Readers to offer rewards for every new Idea which shall be proportioned according to its importance

its importance. and we should really think that Man who found out new principles of act. ion & new wonders & mysteries in Man and the Works of Na. ture. quite as much intitled to the gratitude of the World as him who discovers Farroe Islands and frozen straits or him who studies the properties of Insects stones or plants.

So entirely have preceding authors occupied every branch of Literary research. that we must disdain even seeing any modern truly great original productions viewing Man and the creation with careful curiosity there is no feeling or motive of the mind or the heart which they have not examined there is no wonder of the Universe obvious to mortal eyes which they have not dis-cussed. drawing their imagery from Nature they have made every object

the subject of comparison from the blue Heavens wide spread over our heads to the Earth under our feet - they have found out whatever is Grand whatever is pleasing they have combined every sentiment they have bred every variety of Language Wh. ilst Letters were yet in their infancy if it was difficult to avail himself of the materials gathered by observation yet the consciousness of treading ground yet unpiered by the human footstep must have caused profound sensations to the Author in the course of his progress and have afforded to the reader a fund of entertainment and instruction as he would find new ideas and new information. But when the Poet the Moralist or the Essayist in modern days sits himself down and communicates his sentiments to the Public he has the mortification

reflecting that he can only repeat what has already been often said and be the mere Echo of the sentiments of others. It is true however that the variety of Style is infinite for a number of words are necessary to express an Idea so they may be varied into a great number of combinations. In this respect though nothing new should be said yet some of the charms of novelty may be produced. Every Writer has a peculiarity both in his manner of treating the subject and in the Language used to express his Ideas It is therefore impossible for any two Persons to obtain a style precisely similar and in general Imitators of the manner of any Author do but caricature the Originals. Those who have endeavoured to gain the Style of Addison have followed him in his faults rather than in his

beauties they who imitate Swift have gained his coarseness and vulgarity rather than his clearness and perspicuity and the admirers of Johnson have often degenerated into bombastic nonsense

There also are some kinds of Literary subjects which afford more opportunities for originality of Invention the great Author in all the noble Sciences must always be immutably the same but in the Fairy regions of Poetry and Romance the Imagination may wander at large & unshackled by the bonds of Custom may People the Earth the Sea and the Air with new species of Beings It may subject to new Laws of existence & give them new modes and powers of Action to some it may yield the charge of Elements to ride on the Whirlwind & direct the Storm to others the care of Mankind and

of all animated Nature Indeed the omnipotency of the Imagination is not restrained by any Law but may range through the infinity of Space subverting the rules of order & annihilating by establishing an entire new system for the Government of all things

In subjects of a serious nature too which have for their object men and things as they actually exist Local circumstances may sometimes produce peculiarity of manners or morals and offer room for original observation one may sometimes also repeat a well worn sentiment and make comparisons which have been used ever since the days of Homer and yet be completely original so far as relates to his knowledge of them but these are merely exceptions as a general Rule our position is correct that in all the great subjects of intellectual research the Antients have already so completely

occupied the ground as to afford little chance for novelty in the present age. We have received the following letter from a correspondent, which we publish without comment.

To the Aeronauts.

Gentlemen.

I once heard a beardless clergyman say in the pulpit, that "ideas are a common stock." This gentleman hath practised upon his principle to a large extent; for he has preached a fellow labourer's discourse, before his face.

When I hear every Sunday the same doctrine, language, argument and appeal to the feelings, which I have always listened to from my childhood; when at the bar, whenever facts are the subject of controversy, the same modes and tones and reasonings are employed which were antiquated in the days of Littleton; when in all

public harangues, the same thadamon:
:tade of liberty, freedom and political abuse
is uttered, with which a Grecian demagogue
split the ears of the Athenian demagogues.
I am led to enquire, what is a new Idea?
Is it an animal "in rerum natura"?

By a new Idea, if we understand
that, which hath never before been en=
:gendered in a human brain, we can have
no test to try the operations of reflection
ets to simple Ideas and all the impres=
:sions produced by the objects of sense,
Adam was wiser than any of his descen=
:dants. It gives me a poor opinion of
our modern theorists, when I reflect
that by combination, the mind can con=
:ceive anomalies in nature to infinity.
Nor can we say that we have a new
Idea, when we see a three legged
sheep, or hear of a woman's having been

brought to bed of fifteen strapping ba-
: bies, who all lived to be baptised. So,
when a modern inventor places Paradise
on the Ohio, if this be a new idea, we
can make such articles ad infinitum,
and much more astonishing in their orig-
: inality. We can fix Eden in a swamp
or a horsepond; in a slate quarry or
at the North pole.

The mind is indeed capable of
writing a perpetual commentary on the
works of Baron Munchausen; But we
must exclude absurdity from the object of
our search. Supposing then, that by a new
idea, we understand some original invention
or discovery worthy of a rational being, let
us ask, of what nature must the discovery
be, which is to stamp novelty on the in-
: ventions of its author?

When Sir Isaac Newton and the

apple fall from the tree, he reflected that it was
natural for all bodies so to do, and in
the line of some extended diameter of the
earth, and gave to this tendency the name
of gravity, was this a new Idea? No;
It was only binding the several ideas of
other men together, by a name.

Again, after the long wrangling of
metaphysicians, what are the improve-
ments modern times have seen? We know,
say the schoolmen, that such and such capa-
bilities in bodies to operate by means of light
and air on the senses of sight and hearing,
produce such impressions on the organs as
are perceived by the mind. We know no-
thing of the process by which this is done,
of the configuration of the particles of matter,
or of the nature of a thinking essence; but
we know, that there is no colour, taste &c in
the thing producing those ideas &c. And

did not Adam understand himself as well as this? Did he suppose he could see a rose in the dark, or that there was any sensation of heat in fire?

The mind, says Mr Locke is able to compound ideas, by reflection, to infinity. We beg leave to remark, that this cannot be strictly correct. However numerous our simple ideas may be, a calculation is supposable, whereby we may attain the limit of all their permutations. Yet, in what number of ages, any one man, or any number of men, could go through every possible combination, is a question which the mind can no more grasp in practice, than it can the surplus of infinity, before which all its former combinations shrink at once into a point.

I have been giving you my opinion of what a new idea is not; and should be gratified to hear yours, of what it is.

PHILO PHRENON.